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HEART ECHOES



WILLIAM D. ROBERTSON



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Yours Truly

Wm. Robertson

HEART ECHOES.

BY THE LATE

WILLIAM DAVIDSON ROBERTSON,

BANKFOOT, AUCHTERGAVEN.

Edited by

HIS SISTER ISABELLA,

AND

JOHN PAUL, DUNDEE.

DUNDEE:
JAMES P. MATHEW & CO., COWGATE.

1896

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Contents.

PAGE

Biographical Introduction, ... 9

The Earnest Student.

"Nec Tamen Consumebatur," 19

The Lord's Day, ... 22

A Worshipful Spirit, ... 23

Communion, ... 25

After Communion, ... 26

Come, Holy Spirit, ... 28

Jesus my Lord, ... 29

Grasped by Christ Jesus, ... 30

Labore et Honore, ... 31

Gather, Happy Children, ... 33

Little Pilgrims, ... 34

Infant Praises, ... 35

Children's Day, ... 36

Spared to See Another Year, ... 38

To the New Year, ... 39

O Come, Ye People, ... 40

There is a Land, ... 41

The Son of Consolation.

PAGE

The Toom Place Filled, ... 43

A Touch, ... 45

Talitha Cumi, ... 47

A Hillside Sermon, ... 48

"The Preachin's," 52

Wee Janet, ... 53

In Memoriam—Thomas Young, ... 54

" Rev. Matthew Howieson, . . 55

" Mrs M'Kenzie, ... 56

To Mrs Graham, Edinburgh, ... 57

The Friend of All.

Death in the Path, ... 59

Christmas, ... 60

The Meeting of the Years, ... 61

One Year Goes, Another Comes, ... 62

New Year Song—To the Rev. George Williams, . 63

The Haunted Man—By the Rev. George Williams, 65

Reply to The Haunted Man, ... 67

O Dinna Ban, ... 69

PAGE

The Doctor, ... 70

Headless Rhymes, ... 71

May Day with the Children, ... 71

A May Song, ... 72

The Braes o' Coltrannie, ... 73

Cushnie Glen, ... 74

L'Envoi, ... 75

The Maid of Norrieston, ... 76

The Maiden Wha Shore in the Bandwin wi' Me, . 77

Excelsior, ... 80

BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTION.

To cherish the memory of a sincere and honourable life is a source of comfort and strength, and to perpetuate all that was good, true, and beautiful in the character is to make the world richer and happier. This memorial volume of the heart-echoes of one who was a true poet and a generous friend will revive the benign influence of his personality in those who were acquainted with him, and may serve to cheer them when despondent, and inspire them to seek after the eternal realities when the concerns of this life are pressing hard upon them. The poems are printed as revised by the author shortly before his death, and in many cases the readings are different from what appeared in the newspapers. The corrections were calmly and deliberately made, and on that account are given here as the finished expression of a cultured mind.

The parents of William Davidson Robertson were natives of the Highlands of Perthshire. His mother, Isabella M'Intosh, was born and spent her girlhood in Strathbraan, and his father, Thomas Robertson, belonged to Old Rattray, where his father was a schoolmaster. Both were sprung from that industrious class the God-fearing Scottish peasantry. Shortly after their marriage they migrated to Dundee, and Mr Robertson found employment as a labourer in a mill, but his intelligence and ability marked him out for promotion, and he soon

rose to the position of overseer, which he held until his death in 1854. William was born in Dundee on the 25th of January 1833, and was the eighth child of a family of nine. The home life of the family was characterized by simple piety, wholesome discipline, and undemonstrative affection; just the atmosphere that pervaded the homes and was breathed by the men who made the Scottish character world-renowned for manliness and wisdom.

The following notes from the Poets' Album (*Dundee Weekly News*, 6th October 1888) give some interesting reminiscences of William's school-days, which he supplied to the editor, Mr Robert Ford:—"Among his earlier recollections is the occasion of his being introduced into the Infant School at Blackscroft, which was conducted by Alexander Hutcheson and his wife, a pair of very worthy persons, who did good work in their generation. . . . Mr Hutcheson had learned to play the clarionet, and his pupils were marshalled to and from the playground to such stirring strains as, 'March to the Battlefield,' 'See the Conquering Hero Comes,' and 'The British Grenadiers,' &c., his good lady the while beating time with a tambourine. Happy pupil who got the triangle to beat! In course of time William was transferred to Princes Street School, then in charge of Alexander Macfarlane, and made fair progress in the mastery of the three R's. Here he had as a fellow-pupil a tall, big boned, square shouldered, live New Zealander, Tekawara Smiler by name, whom some local Christian and humane gentleman had picked up as a castaway about the docks, and sent to school to learn English. Tekawara was tattooed breast and face, even to the roots of his jet-black hair. 'I was,' writes Mr Robertson, 'his frequent tutor in reading, being set apart

thereto by the schoolmaster, and was often tempted to smile at his queer pronunciation :—

> 'Tey gru in booty shide by shide,
> Tey filched wan hom wich glee!'

This was how he delivered Mrs Hemans' beautiful and familiar lines. I dared not smile. Tekawara was a savage, and very sensitive to ridicule, and prone to resent it. School-days over, I went to work in a spinning mill, in a department of which my father was overseer. To the same manufacturing establishment Tekawara, having finished his education, followed to learn to be a mechanic. . . . Dressed in moleskins, tattooed face and all, going to and coming from his work just like other decent folks."

But the leading of Providence is wonderful. It was soon made clear that mill life was not in the plan. Though he was promoted to the position of office boy, yet the noise and the greasy odour from the material and the machinery brought on sickness and continual headaches, and he had to give up his situation. Writing of this period of his life afterwards, he said that he "envied the lot of those country people, with their bright eyes and ruddy fresh countenances, coming into the town on market mornings. They seemed to come from some 'Happy Land, far, far away'—a land of sunshine, of hill and dale, stream and wood, and singing birds."

That difficult parental problem, "What shall we make of our son?" had to be faced and solved once more. It is wonderful how well defined the path becomes to those who are anxiously looking for guidance and direction. An opening as a grocer's apprentice presented itself, and he applied and was successful. While

at the grocery trade he developed a love for literature, shorthand, and music, and after his apprenticeship was over, when he became a clerk in the Post Office, Dundee, he continued his studies, and was well known in musical and literary circles as an intelligent and thoughtful young man. A gentleman who was intimately acquainted with him, writing after his death, thus summarizes his gifts and capacities :—"For a number of years he was a respected official in connection with the Post Office, being, if I mistake not, the first money order clerk in that establishment. His company at that time was much in request by intelligent and embryo literary young men, who were fascinated by his delightful talk of the books he had read. He was also an expert French scholar and shorthand writer, and it was his custom to take down 'the thoughts that breathed and the words that burned' from the lips of all the wandering oratorical 'stars' who came within his radius. Mr Robertson was an accomplished musician. He was a member of the Dundee Philharmonic Society, then under the direction of the late Mr Spindler, and was one of the oboe players. The violin was, however, the instrument he loved the most, and many a social party has been made merry by the melodious strains of this instrument. His love for music abode with him all his life long, and many of the rising generation in Bankfoot have reason to be grateful for the musical instruction, which it was a labour of love for Mr Robertson to bestow. He had a fine tenor voice, and a good knowledge of music in both notations, and could make the subject attractive to the veriest amateur."

He had often sighed for a life in the country, and in 1878 his wishes were fulfilled, when he secured the situation of clerk in the factory at Bankfoot, and after-

wards the position of salesman to the Auchtergaven Provision Society. Here he settled down in view of the grand hills, the beautiful dales, and the silver streams, and we have ample evidence in his poems that his spirit was in sympathy with his surroundings. Still further to show his love for nature, the following extracts from "A Muirland Ramble in May," which he contributed to the *Stirling Sentinel*, 24th June 1890, are worth quoting:—"East winds and blue noses notwithstanding, May is my favourite month. Nature is then in her virginity, her vesture is of the loveliest green, span new, and gemmed with the loveliest blossoms. I have longed and wearily waited for the advent of this pretty maiden with her drapery of green, studded and gemmed with, to me, the prettiest flowers of the year—primrose, daisy, and violet, and wreathed with cherry and apple blossom. It is Emerson, I think, who says, 'Why bring me to gaze on and admire your highly cultivated garden with its neatly trimmed walks and carefully tended flowers? I cannot look anywhere without beholding beauty!' In like manner, I at this season find beauty everywhere, and I prefer the bypaths and the fields to the garden; the gowany lea, the muirland, and the wild wood to the ornamental park. 'Nature when unadorned (by art) is adorned the most.' Happily I have not far to wander in search of wild bits of muirland. Running from the top of the steep slope, at the foot of which stands the village of Bankfoot, is a green loan. At the far end of this loan, which is only a quarter of a mile long, three lairds' lands meet—the lands of Coltrannie, Murthly, and Nairne. After I get to the end of the loan, one step lands me into Cairnleath Moss, otherwise the Muir o' Thorn, a wide expanse of verdant heath, a sea of golden gorse, the home at this season of innumerable

wild birds. Seagulls by the thousand are wheeling and screaming around yon natural basin in the centre of the Moss, or flitting overhead to and from their feeding grounds in the valley down yonder, from which I have just come. I have no sooner set foot within the Muir than a brace of peewits come on hasty wing, greeting me as an intruder by wheeling and screaming a few feet above my head, and swiftly whirring before and behind me, coming so close to my ears that I feel the wind caused by the proximity of their wings. When I am clear past their nest they leave me alone. Now for delicious draughts of the purest and most invigorating air, balmy with the perfume of wild flower and plants and herbs. Such a delight to tread the close, thickset springy verdant turf, or to recline on some of the mossy banks soft as down, and the prospect all around so extensive! This tableland is so elevated above the surrounding country that from it I can see the hills and mountains in five or six different counties—the Ochils, the Fife Lomonds, the Sidlaws, the lower range of the Grampians, are as it were at my elbow, the loftier range in Aberdeen and Kincardine Shires, many of their peaks capped with snow.

"This extensive tract of muirland is renowned for the rare botanical specimens which have been found in it by naturalists. Thus it is a splendid field for the excursions of the natural science clubs whose head-quarters are not too far removed from this tempting region.

.

"The sun is now high, and the sky being almost cloudless, his rays are beating upon me just rather strong. This constrains me to seek the shelter of the trees of Coltrannie Wood which overhang the western edge of

the Moss, and a part of the wood by which Bonnie Prince Charlie and his Highlandmen marched to the south. It is currently told that his army encamped a night on the Moss. I sit me down in the middle of the road, now turf-covered. These beautiful overhanging light-green fronds of the firs afford a deliciously cool screen from the sun. I hear a peculiar chick, chick, above my head, and looking up I see a squirrel eyeing me from his perch. He is now beating a tattoo with his forepaws on the bark of the tree, which sound like the raps of two little wooden mallets. He wants to get a closer look at me, and he lets himself drop from branch to branch so nimbly and so neatly that he must have a way of his own of calculating distance and impetus to a hair.

"Such a stillness reigns in the muirland solitude!—a stillness broken only by the warbling of some feathered songster, the plaintive wail of the curlew, or the distant scream of the seagull—a stillness that at this hour seems to become more still, when even the lightest breezes seem to fall altogether away, and all nature seems hushed—the very sun seems to pause in his course. It is meridian. The skyey tide is at the full!"

Amidst such surroundings the poetical spirit of Mr Robertson was nurtured, and the overflowings of his mind in the shape of hymns, poems, and songs are full of natural and pleasing images. These found ready entrance to the columns of such newspapers and magazines as the *People's Journal*, *Weekly News*, *Perthshire Constitutional and Journal*, *Perthshire Courier*, *Stirling Sentinel*, *Glasgow Weekly Mail*, *Aberdeen Free Press*, *Perth Free Church Presbytery's Record*, *Children's Record of the Free Church of Scotland*, and the *Children's Magazine of the U.P. Church*. Though the largest

number of his contributions have his name in full or his initials appended, yet he frequently signed himself "Wild Rose"; and "Muirland Jock" and "Auchtergaven Callant" have each been used.

A brief sketch of his life and four of his poems appeared in the seventh series of "Modern Scottish Poets" —edited and issued by Mr D. H. Edwards, of Brechin, in 1884. Mr Edwards says of him that he "Is a poet whose mind appears to revolve in an atmosphere of reflective thought and piety, and his poems and hymns are penetrated by feeling and tasteful spirituality. . . . His writings, both in prose and verse, contributed to several magazines and newspapers are full of pleasing thought, and are instinct with a poetical and devout spirit."

While on his deathbed, a few days before he passed away, a letter came from Mr Robert Ford, of Glasgow, asking permission to include his name and specimens of his poetry in a volume he was then engaged on, "The Harp of Perthshire," and the last letter he wrote was in reply granting the request. The thought that he was to be remembered in the annals of Scottish song was a source of comfort to him in his last hours.

Mr Robertson was never married, but his sister, Isabella, who gave up her business in Dundee to become his housekeeper, filled his home with the sunshine of love, and it would have been difficult to have found one more unselfish and more unsparing in her efforts to make her brother comfortable and happy. Like-minded, and endowed with the same poetic faculty, she was able to sympathize with him in his efforts to attain the poetical ideals he had set before himself, and to cheer him on to better things. This volume is the outcome of her sisterly affection, and long may she

be spared to cherish the memory of her noble-minded brother.

Mr Robertson died at Bankfoot on the 1st of February 1891, and was laid to rest in the Parish Churchyard of Auchtergaven. His simple Christian life commanded the respect and esteem of the whole community, and his remains were followed to the grave by many sincere mourners.

The following extract from a letter written by one of his correspondents sums up the chief features in the character of this good man and genuine poet :—"I had the pleasure of knowing deceased for many years, first through the intimacy of a mutual friend, then personally, but chiefly through his epistolary correspondence, and I never knew one more amiable in character, more charitable in his estimates of men and things, more anxious to raise the common-places of life into the purer atmosphere of the ideal. I know also that the principles he advocated and approved of in speech he carried out consistently in his everyday life."

His earnest spirit yearned for fuller light
 Upon the mysteries of life and death, and o'er
 The page of Revelation did he pore
Till faith grew strong, and to his quickened sight
The spirit-world grew clearer ; a delight
 To seek its portals, and to ope the door,
 And revel in its glories. More and more
The eye of faith saw farther through the night.
 Compassionate and sensitive, he felt
 The well-springs of his heart o'erflow to all
 Who drank of sorrow's cup. And lowly knelt
 Before the throne a blessing down to call.
 A son of consolation, and a friend
 Who, Christlike, was leal-hearted to the end.

J. P.

The Earnest Student.

"Nec Tamen Consumebatur."

LIKE a meteor's gleam, o'er the desolate plain,
The flaming bush shone like a "marvellous light,"
Entrancing the gaze of the lone shepherd swain,
Who turned from his flock to behold the "great sight,"
For Jehovah was there, ev'n the Lord God of Might,
And, lo, the bush was not consumed!

In narrowing circles, moves nearer and near
The moth to swift death in the fierce lambent flame:
So Moses, o'erpowered with amazement and fear,
Was drawn towards the fire, but from 'midst thereof came
A voice—'twas Jehovah's, I AM is His name,
And Moses was not consumed!

How meet that this man ev'n on bare, barren earth,
Which God's awful presence had made holy ground,
Should cast off his shoes—O! I reverence the hearth
And the home where the fear of the Lord doth abound,
And love to the Saviour in each heart is found,
For these things can ne'er be consumed!

Though towering in honour of Mary or Paul,
The loftiest Fane that men's hands could uprear;
Though lavishly garnished with art, and with all
The wealth of a kingdom, if Christ dwelt not there,
To me it could never be His house of prayer—
One day it would all be consumed!

But I love my wee kirk on yon bonnie hillside,
Which the conflict, called "Ten Years," has handed down *free*
From Erastian bonds—Lord, whate'er may betide,
O shine in our Zion so dear unto me!
O grant that she true to her symbol may be—
A bush burning and not consumed!

A symbol divine of the Spirit who breathed
At the first o'er the dark formless chaotic void,
And from elements crude, which but weltered and seethed,
Formed system and sun, moon and stars, asteroid,
And this earth, which by fire will one day be destroyed,
And all things therein consumed!

A symbol divine of the God-kindled flame
Which burns in man's breast and gleams in his eye;
Though he must return to the dust whence he came,
His soul shall outlast all the stars in the sky;
Created immortal, the soul cannot die,
But will live, and can ne'er be consumed!

For though it is written, and therefore ordained,
By Him who made all things, God, righteous and true,
That "Death came on all men, for all men have sinned";
Yet, praised be His name, He reveals to our view
His covenant of life, which He came to renew
At the bush which was not consumed!

Yea, our Covenant-God, ever ready to bless,
Remembered His people in far Egypt land;
His listening ear heard their cry of distress,
As they groaned 'neath the yoke and the taskmaster's hand;
To lead them out *free* He gave Moses command
At the bush which was not consumed!

Who could speak of th' oppressions from which since the fall
Countless myriads have groaned! could we travel along
The dark, doleful record, the tale would appal—
The horrible cruelty, tyranny, wrong:
The weak trampled down and enslaved by the strong,
Till the last ray of hope was consumed!

But God is our Refuge, and tyrants shall know
That He of earth's princes is both Lord and King;
Though Pharaoh refuse to let Israel go,
With songs of deliverance the welkin shall ring
When safe through the sea He His people will bring
Up to where the bush was not consumed!

And then, in "that mountain," in beauty will rise
The Wilderness Church for thanksgiving and prayer;
Whence smoke of burnt offerings will waft toward the skies,
And praise to our God fill the wild desert air;
For His redeemed people shall worship Him there,
As He sware at the bush not consumed!

The Lord's Day.

(Psalm cxviii. 24, 25.)

ANOTHER day peculiarly Thine own
Hath dawned serenely on my opening sight,
With gladsome heart I come before Thy throne
To praise Thy sparing mercy, Lord of Might.

O may the Sun of Righteousness arise
On me this hallowed morn with cheering ray!
Lift my desires to realms beyond the skies,
Where I shall spend an endless Sabbath Day.

Help me, O Lord, to spend this day to Thee
In thankful offerings for Thy mercies given;
In lowly worship I would bend the knee
To Thee whom angels praise in highest heaven.

O bring me to Thy sanctuary, Lord!
Be with Thy saints Thy blessing to impart;
Help us to praise Thy name, to read Thy Word,
And render Thee true homage of the heart.

And while we listen to the joyful sound
Of Thy rich mercy to our rebel race,
May love, fresh kindling, in our hearts abound
To Him who died to save us through His grace.

Where'er, O Lord, Thy message is proclaimed
To fallen man, Thy gracious power bestow;
Where'er Thy great and saving name is named,
Convince, convert, constrain the knee to bow.

Soon, soon may every realm and people know
Thy sacred name, and sacred honours pay
To Thee, the Sovereign Lord of all below,
For this end may Thy servants work and pray.

A Worshipful Spirit.

"I will worship toward Thy holy temple."
—Psalm cxxxviii. 2.

FATHER of lights, Thy name we bless
For this first Sabbath of the year;
And all Thy loving kindnesses
We will within Thy courts declare.

The former year Thy goodness crowned,
And with increase our garners stored;
Thy covenant mercies much abound,
And bless our homes, and cheer our board.

We praise Thee for the church we love;
Her pastors, brethren, children dear;
For Jesus, King enthroned above,
Who, though unseen, is ever near.

Give joy to mourning hearts that grieve
For loss of loved ones called away;
Poor and afflicted ones relieve,
And be Thou still the orphan's stay.

Oft heard we in the year that's fled
Thy truth proclaimed with glowing tongue;
In rapt devotion heavenward sped
The prayer oft made, the praises sung.

At Christ's own table too we sat:
No holier joy can mortals feel;
What hallowed memories linger yet
Of love and grace unspeakable!

Let all Thy mercies, Lord, incline
Our hearts to seek Thee more and more;
Henceforth we would be wholly Thine
To love, to serve, and to adore.

Communion

In Auchtergaven Free Church.

COME, Spirit, ever blest,
Into Thy House of Rest,
And bring for broken hearts Thy blesséd healing.
Come, like the balmy spring,
Come as on dove's soft wing,
To weary souls the Lamb of God revealing.

Come, like the sun's bright rays,
Which flood Thy House of Praise
With gladsome light, through every lattice streaming;
Pour on these souls of Thine
The light of love divine,
Which in Immanuel's blesséd face is beaming.

Around the festive board
We meet with one accord,
To keep the ordinance of His appointing;
Let fall celestial dew,
Baptize us all anew—
Thy ministers, as with fresh oil anointing.

O more of Christ to know,
O more like Christ to grow,
As grow the lilies, pure and bright and tender;
Lord, that our lives may be
Made beautiful for Thee,
By lowly service done in glad surrender.

So may Thy rest and calm,
The true soul-healing balm,
Strengthen us for Thy work and witness-bearing;
That, earthly seasons past,
We meet in heaven at last,
Thy everlasting rest and glory sharing.

After Communion.

"And this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with Him in the holy mount."—2 PETER i. 18.

UP to the holy mount this day,
With joy and gladness we did go;
With eager step bent we our way,
And soon the world was far below.

To us in mercy it was given
To see the Saviour's glory there;
Seemed it the very gate of heaven,
For surely we did breathe its air.

Fell soft and low upon the ear
Through the still air the Master's voice—
"Eat, O my friends—lo, I am near;
Drink, O beloved, and rejoice!"

And, lo! a banquet, passing rare—
Rich wine and manna from above;
While o'er us streamed His banner fair,
Emblazoned with Redeeming Love.

And while the Bread of Life we eat,
We call to mind the agony,
The cross, the shame, the bloody sweat—
The night in dark Gethsemane.

O Lamb of God, our sin we mourn,
But Thou canst cleanse the deepest stain;
Speak peace to hearts with sorrow torn,
And bring us back to Thee again.

"Drink, drink," He cries; "this is My blood,
With this is sealed the covenant sure;
From everlasting it hath stood,
To everlasting shall endure."

We pledged our hearts through weal or ill
To love Him long as life shall last;
We pledged our all to serve Him still—
Then from our eyes the vision passed.

Full slowly we our way retrace
Adown the mount to scenes of care;
To keep Thy vows, O Lord, give grace—
Be this our after-supper prayer.

Come, Holy Spirit.

COME, Spirit, pure and blest,
Thy glory let me see;
Thy dwelling make within this breast,
And fit it, Lord, for Thee.

Come to create anew
My nature, marred with sin—
O make me pure and right and true
And beautiful within.

Life-giving Paraclete,
Make Thou my spirit whole;
With healing interpenetrate
The chambers of my soul.

Darkness and doubt remove;
Shed forth Thy holy light;
Come with glad unction from above
To cheer my inward sight.

'Tis Thine to light my way
Through this dark vale of woe;
From the right path let me not stray,
My wayward will subdue.

Lord, I would be content,
Whate'er my earthly lot,
If with Thy holiness were blent
My every deed and thought.

Be Thou through changeful years
My Comforter and Friend;
And when I quit this vale of tears
I'll praise Thee without end.

Jesus My Lord.

JESUS my Lord, my Sun and Shield,
Thou who my soul from death did'st free,
Unloose my tongue, aid me to yield
A joyful meed of praise to Thee.

Fountain of Life and Truth and Light,
The ground of all my hopes and peace,
Thy gladsome beams dispelled my night,
Thy voice bade guilty terrors cease.

Master, whate'er I call my own,
Here at Thy feet I would resign;
Lord, I would live as Thine alone,
My chiefest joy to call Thee mine.

My Shepherd, I in Thee confide,
Permit me not from Thee to stray;
No danger lurks where Thou dost lead,
For Thou at once art Guide and Way.

O not on earth, and not in heaven
Is one whom I desire like Thee;
Wholly to Thee I would be given:
O be Thou all in all to me.

Grasped by Christ Jesus.

(Phil. iii. 12).

HOW shall I ever cease to praise
The hand which did me apprehend,
Careering madly in the ways
Which downward to destruction tend?

O Saviour mine! I bless the hour
When, grasped by Thee with loving hand,
I was released from Satan's power,
And rescued as a burning brand.

Lord, I would ever follow Thee,
And in Thy strength strive to attain
To that ideal life—to be
Aye found in Thee, my chiefest gain.

Let no vain thought lurk in my mind
That I am perfect, need no more
To strive, but leaving things behind,
Still stretch to things which are before.

And ever pressing to the goal,
 And reaching forth to gain the prize,
O may my rescued, ransomed soul
 Share Thy sweet rest beyond the skies.

Labore et Honore.

"Why stand ye here all the day idle?"—MATT. XX. 6.

IN the world's market place
 Idle to-day;
Losing the heavenward race
 Dreaming away;
Gird to thy task undone,
Ere lost yon sinking sun,
Fight till the victory's won—
 Up and away!

What thy hands find to do,
 Do it to-day;
Night—ah, how near to you!
 Work while you may;
Wait neither time nor tide,
Every weight cast aside—
Folly, sloth, pleasure, pride—
 Up and away!

Seed fields of richest soil
Call thee to-day;
Heaven shall reward thy toil,
Hear and obey;
Harvest of golden grain,
Blessing for all thy pain,
Verily thou shalt gain—
Up and away!

Lose not the golden hours,
Dreaming away,
While hell's malignant powers
Swell their array;
Arm, arm, be brave and true,
Valiantly dare and do,
Glorious reward for you—
Up and away!

Onward and upward then,
Heavenward thy way;
Angels shall guard thee when
Entered the fray;
Fight for the golden crown,
Thine shall be bright renown,
When laid thy armour down—
On then away!

Gather, Happy Children!

GATHER, happy children, gather,
And with heart and voice unite;
Sing the praise of God the Father,
He is Lord of love and light;
Round the throne let all appear,
And with God begin the year.

Jesus, like a shepherd tender,
Look on us while here we bow;
Little lambs to Thee surrender—
O receive and bless us now;
From the pitfall and the snare
Keep our feet while runs the year.

Holy Spirit, make Thy dwelling
In each lowly loving heart;
May we list Thy sweet voice telling
Us to choose the better part;
Point for us the pathway clear
As we journey through the year.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
Three in One, and One in Three,
Through the faith of Jesus' merit
May we Thy salvation see,
And in an eternal sphere
Spend an everlasting year.

Little Pilgrims.

O COME, let us be pressing
Along the heavenly road;
Safe from all fears distressing,
We 'll reach the bright abode
Where saints in bliss transcending
Surround the Saviour's throne;
Angelic hosts attending
With songs Him King they own.

Full many a martyr hoary,
Full many a saint of God,
Even children now in glory,
The pilgrim's path have trod;
Why should we fear to follow
That glorious happy band?
Farewell to pleasures hollow;
We 'll hie to glory-land.

O may we grow in meetness
For that bright happy home,
And strive to gain completeness
While here on earth we roam.
Lord, send Thy preservation
From weakness and from sin;
O shield us from temptation,
And cleanse the heart within.

Lo, yonder is the river
 Between us and that shore
Where sin and death can never
 Grieve little pilgrims more :
The Saviour succour lending,
 We 'll safely cross the tide ;
Our pilgrim journey ending,
 We 'll aye with Him abide.

Infant Praises.

HAIL to our Redeemer King !
 Cheerfully we come to sing
Grateful songs of praise to Thee ;
Hear our artless minstrelsy.

Joyfully we will proclaim
Matchless honours to Thy name ;
Echoing the songs above,
While we praise Thy wondrous love.

Thou did'st leave Thy throne on high,
And on earth did'st bleed and die
Little children to redeem—
We will sing the wondrous theme.

As in days and years we grow,
While we sojourn here below,
May we ever grow in grace—
Ever seek Thy blessed face.

Thine in childhood we would be,
Thine when riper years we see,
Thine when drawn our parting breath,
Thine when closed our eyes in death.

Children's Day.

SABBATH school and congregation,
Raise to-day the grateful song
To the God of our salvation,
Who our Zion doth make strong;
Pastors, teachers,
Parents, children,
Mingle in each praising throng.

Ye who dwell in vale or highland,
Meet to-day in Jesus' name;
Ye who dwell on coast or island,
Swell the praise of Jesus' fame;
Pastors, teachers,
Parents, children,
Laud your King with loud acclaim!

Pastors, teachers, tell the story—
 Tell of Christ the crucified,
How for us He veiled His glory,
 Came to earth and bled and died
 To redeem us
 From sin's thraldom—
O let Christ be magnified.

Parents, sacred vows renewing,
 Yield your children to His care;
And while mercies past reviewing,
 Breathe the humble fervent prayer
 That the Saviour
 Still would lead them
Safely through each future year.

Parents, teachers, give them training
 In the knowledge of the Lord;
Be ye not yourselves refraining
 From due reading of His word;
 Every evening,
 Every morning,
In your homes be God adored.

Children, follow good behaviour,
 Be obedient, humble, mild;
Imitate your loving Saviour,
 Who for you became a child:
 O so lowly,
 And so holy,
Harmless, pure and undefiled.

God who hearest our petitions,
Let Thy Spirit still descend
On our Church, her work and missions—
Comfort, strengthen, and extend;
O be gracious
To Thy vineyard,
Lord, a double blessing send.

Spared to See Another Year.

SPARED to see another year
Dawning on our pilgrim way;
Let us in God's house appear,
There our thankful homage pay.

For His mercies in the past,
Let our thankful praise ascend;
Plead for grace while trials last,
And His favour to the end.

Children, have ye aught to bring—
Aught to lay at Jesus' feet?
Give your hearts, an offering,
To the Saviour—O how sweet:

Thus the year we would begin,
That His children we may be;
Lord, keep little ones from sin—
May we ever follow Thee.

Known to Thee is all our way,
All through life be Thou our guide;
Little lambs are prone to stray,
Saviour, keep them near Thy side.

As in days and years they grow,
May they grow in grace and love;
Spare them for Thy church below,
Fit them for Thy courts above.

To the New Year.

(The 1st day of January 1888 was a Sabbath.)

O YEAR that gently glideth in,
To greet us on this hallowed morn,
What hopes and fears are with thee born,
To mark thee in this world of sin?

Annus Domini! year of Grace!
Dies Domini! day of Peace!
Twin sisters born in hopeful hour,
A gift from God, a gracious dower.

Throughout our own beloved land
Let Grace and Peace go hand and hand;
Cast their sweet spell o'er sea and shore,
Till strife and discord rage no more.

Let Grace subdue a world of sin,
Let Peace her blessed reign begin:
Both weave a cord of love to bind
In one the hearts of all mankind.

O God of Peace, O God of Grace,
Lead by Thy hand our wandering race!
Let nations learn while runs the year
Thy laws to keep, Thy name to fear!

O Come, Ye People!

O COME, ye people, one and all,
And listen to the gospel call!
Your loving Saviour bids you come,
He knows you 've wandered far from home.

O come to Jesus! why delay?
Salvation free He gives to-day;
Come then, ye weary ones, and rest
Upon Immanuel's loving breast.

Behold how patiently He stands—
How lovingly, with outstretched hands,
He pleads with you to let Him in,
Ev'n though you may be full of sin!

He shed His precious blood for you,
And now He lives to bless you too!
To-day He asks you to receive
That peace which He alone can give.

O do not slight the gracious call
Of Him who loves you one and all!
Let angels wing their heavenward way,
With news of lost ones found to-day.

There is a Land.

(Isaiah xxxiii. 17).

THERE is a land where love eternal reigns,
A land of light and life beyond the skies;
Full oft, when weary with earth's toils and pains,
I upward gaze with wistful longing eyes:
The while my dearest aspirations rise
Towards that blest haven of my soul's desire;
For we inherit *that* which never dies;
And ours those ardent longings, which do higher
Than life's delusive dreams or earth's vain shows aspire.

Here all is Semblance; there—Reality!
The tenure of our earthly life is brief;
Yet man is born to immortality,

Though here he undergoes much pain and grief,
With death at last—God's message of relief—
For then corporeal ills are at an end,
Passive he lies, like to a fallen leaf;
Th' immortal part of him has gone to spend
Its endless years—but where? This doth my thought transcend.

Come, blessed Hope, sure anchor of the soul,
Which entereth into *that* within the veil;
Come, Faith, and bear me on to that bright goal,
Tho' frail my bark and tempest-torn my sail;
Shrink not, my soul, to pass thro' death's dark vale,
Ev'n there thou 'lt not be comfortless; for He,
Whom cruel hands (for sins of thine) did nail
'Midst malefactors to th' accursed tree,
Shall lead thee to thy home: His beauty thou shalt see!

The Son of Consolation.

The Toom Place Filled.

(John xi.)

I WAT thae lassies were begrutten sair,
A dowie hame was theirs as e'er ye saw;
An' aye 's their een wad licht upon his chair,
Stannin' sae toom—ochone! the tears wid fa';
Death gart the hoose luik no' the same ava'.
The neebors ca'd to comfort them in need;
'Twas maistlins vain—the prap bein' ta'en awa';
An' mair, the twa had luik'd for his remeade
Frae Ane wha hadna come afore their brither dee'd.

They had sent timely word that he was ill
To Him they coonted as their trusty Frien';
He cam' na. Had He tint for them gudewill,
That He twa days still bides whaur He had been?
It luik'd nae like His usual, they did ween;
But yet they cudna think their trust beleed;
Sae wait a wee, an' syne it will be seen
That He was still a faithfu' Frien' indeed,
Though steerin' ne'er a fit afore their brither dee'd.

At last they laid the corpse amang his kin,
Wha nae mair see the sun nor hear the blast;
Whaur cease for aye the warl's strife an' din;
For to the deid the things o' time are past.
Thae lassies thocht o' him they 'd seen the last
That noo frae a' thing earthly he was freed,
An' they cam' hame frae's burial sair dooncast.
But Ane there is wha feels for herts that bleed:
He comes, He comes to gie them back their deid!

For noo the Maister wastlins taen His way,
To gie thae puir things hert'nin His intent;
The toon was in a steer, atweel that day;
The sisters ran, to meet Him they were bent;
An' Mary fell at 's feet as in a fent;
Syne tauld Him o' the weird 'at they had dree'd,
An' siccan days o' sorra they had spent;
The while her prostrat form He meekly e'ed
She cried, "Gin Thood'st been here my brither hadna dee'd!"

"Thy brither, verilie, sall rise again!"
The Maister said, while love in 's bosom glowed;
An' words sic-like, whilk ne'er frae tongue nor pen
Hae come afore nor since, frae 's lips there flowed;
O, mony a thocht on them hae I bestowed!
Words, Gude be praised, whilk he that runs may read;
An' meelions o' oor race to them hae owed—
Sic poo'er hae they to rout a' fear an' dreed—
The heavenly peace an' joy they had afore they dee'd.

"Whaur hae ye laid him?" syne the Maister said,
An' Mary, cannilie did guide Him where
Her brither, in a vault near by, was laid—
By this time neebors roun' had gather'd there,—
Sae after twa three words an' syne a prayer—
"Come forth, My friend!" the Maister cried aloud—
Save 's a'! the deid man's feet were on the stair,
An' oot he cam' rowed in a snaw-white shrood!
An' ane an a' praised God, an' lang, lang wonderin stood.

A Touch.

(Luke viii. 43-48).

SEE yon puir afflictit creatur',
Dwinin' sair in form an' featur',
Unco wan wi' loss o' bluid;
Weary twal years she's been ailin',
A' she tried 's been nane availin'—
Aiblins dune mair harm than guid.

Wared on doctors a' her livin',
Hinmost plack an' farden given,
Vain their drugs an' skill an' lear;
Help noo mair than ever needin',
Sib an' frem't gae by unheedin'
'At she sits sae dowie there.

Dames draw skirts, an' sail by faster,
Gentles sanctified shy past her—
Scruffin' claes wid them defile!
O, thou weary pinin' woman!
Hert'nin' thee would be mair human,
Yet for thee nae couthie smile!

But there's Ane wha kens ye're grievin'—
His delicht to gie relievin',
Coffs thy life ev'n frae the grave.
Ay! He's mercifu' an' holy,
Lifts the boo'ed-doon puir and lowly;
Strang is He to heal and save.

Whisht!—What means the distant hummin'?
Sic a crood!—An wha's this comin'?
Lo, the Man o' Nazareth!
Mercy me! she's aff and strivin'
'Mang the thick—I wis sic drivin'
Mayna be the creatur's death.

Whiles the boatie through rough watter,
Whilk e'en boord an' beam micht shatter,
For safe port the tide maun stem;
Sae the woman birzes through them,
Life or death, she maun mak' to Him,
Just to touch His garment's hem.

Touch't ! !—An' sic a touch ! revealin'
To her sense miraculous healin'
O' her waefu' maladie ;
Hear His words, hoo sweetly spoken,
" Daughter, go in peace ! " a token
O' the love to her—an' me !

Talitha Cumi.

(Mark v. 41).

THE faither 's hert 's forfochen sair,
For his wee lassie, deein' there ;
The doctors, baffled, can do nae mair
For the puir lammie.

He hears that Ane comes to the toon,
Whase skill 's been noised the kintra roun' ;
See hoo the streets he bickers doon
For help till 's lammie !

He mak's him for yon multitude,
Wha roun' the Maister thrang an' crood ;
Warslin' inower to whaur He stood,
Cries—" Save my lammie ! "

Ane frae 's ain hoose a wee thing rash
Drew naur—his words cut like a lash
The faither's hert—" Why sud ye fash ?
Clean gane 's your lammie ! "

Syne spak' the Maister—"Dinna grieve!
Fear na, O man, but just believe!
Wha trust in Me, though deid, sall leeve,
An' sae your lammie!"

Behaud the Maister at the bed,
Whauron sweet twal-year-auld lay dead!
He took her wee cauld hand an' said,
"Rise, My sweet lammie!"

Her speerit comes, she opes her eyes,
An' aff the couch on whilk she lies;
Noo joy, instead o' tears an' cries
For the wee lammie!

Noo, bairns, the Maister's here th' day—
Oh, dinna turn frae Him away;
For, gin ye list, ye 'll hear Him say,
"Come, ilk wee lammie!"

A Hillside Sermon.

(Matt. v).

THE day was warm, the sky was clear,
An' cludless, far's the e'e cud reach;
An hunders cam' frae far an' near,
To hear an unco Preacher preach.

Nae kirk cud haud the half, I wat;
An' sae they speel'd a green hillside;
An' there upon the girse they sat
An' form'd a congregation wide.

The hill birds up, an' aff they whirred;
The sheep, dumfoon'ert, glow'red and ran,
An' turn't an' glow'red, syne aff they birred.
When a' was quate a voice began:

"Fair fa' the anes in speerit puir,
Wha brag na o' their gifts or grace;
To sic there is the promise sure:
They 'll in God's kingdom get a place.

"Fair fa' the dooncast an' the sad,
Wha dowie are aboot hert sin;
Lat sic be cheerfu', for I 's wad
'At theirs sall be gran' comfortin'.

"Fair fa' the meek an' lowly man,
Though puir an' o' the meanest birth;
Yet na'theless it 's in God's plan,
By heirship his the fruitfu' earth.

"An' they wha thirst for richteousness,
Wha set their herts on heavenly gear,
A fu' cup sall be theirs—nae less,
Theyse get till they can haau nae mair.

"Fair fa' the canny an' the kin',
Wha wadna do a cruel deed;
The mercifu' in hert an' min'
Sall mercy get in time o' need.

"The bairns' herts—hoo pure an' clean!
Wha ony ill in them cud trace?
Fair fa' sic-like, to them it 's gien
To see My heavenly Faither's face.

"When din brak's oot, bear this in mind,
The way o' peace aye airt your road;
For peace is best, an' that ye 'll find,
An' ye 'll be ca'd the bairns o' God.

"Wha for God's richt dree death or chain
At hands o' fierce or bluidy men;
Fair fa' thae same, for they sall gain
A kingdom that sall hae nae en'.

"When for My sake ye hae to dree
The bitter scorn, the hatefu' froon,
An' persecution gars ye flee
For verra life frae toon to toon.

"Be gled, for sic 's been dune afore;
'Twas sae your godlie fore-bears fared
For you the martyr's croon 's in store,
An' great in heaven is your rewaird.

"O' this dark warl ye are the licht,
Afore fouk lat it shine like day;
Yon city isna hid frae sicht,
For, lo, it stands upon a brae.

"Sae lat your licht be seen by men—
They need the licht to lat them see;
An' by your warks ye 'll lat them ken
'At ye hae gat your licht frae Me.

"By earth or heaven—na! dinna swear,
For God alane the same did mak';
Nor by your heid—ae single hair
Ye canna cheenge to white or black.

"To lo'e a neebor or a frien'
Is but an ord'nar' thing to dae:
Your guidness isna worth ae preen,
Till ye can lo'e your bitter fae.

"Yon cheerie sun, whilk blinks abune,
My Faither sends to warm ye a';
He gars the cluds drap fatness doon—
On bad an' guid His saft shooers fa'.

"For ill ye get lat guid be given;
As ye'd be dune by, sae do ye;
An' as your Faither wha 's in heaven
Is perfect, even sae mat ye be."

* * * *

I've sermons heard, I've sermons read,
A vast hae sermons tried to mak';
But this ane—a' wha heard it said,
"Like this man nae man ever spak'."

"The Preachin's."

THE tables were busket wi' linen sae clean,
A by-ord'nar' stillness crap owre the scene;
Wee laddies sat by, an' wee lassies a wheen—
Hoo their eenie were starin' wi' wonder!

The minister spak' o' the love, "mair than love,"
Whilk fush God's ain Son frae the glory above
To dee on a cross, oor redemption to prove;
An' we cud do naething but wonder!

The elders gaed round wi' the breid an' the wine,
Whilk speak to oor sauls o' His deein divine;
An' we say in oor herts "Evermair, Lord, we 're Thine,"
An' syne we 're a' lost—lost in wonder!

An' here are auld saunts wi' their heids boo'ed an' grey,
Gettin' rest an' refreshin' frae toil o' the way;
They bless an' they thank Him fu' hertie this day,
Whase faithfu'ness still gars them wonder!

Afore we depairt on oor several ways,
Oor voices are joined in a sweet psalm o' praise;
O for strength'nin' to mind till the end o' oor days
O' the promise we made, rapt in wonder!

Wee Janet.

O SHE was cheery, fu' o' glee;
Sae spunky, pawky, an' sae slee;
Aft played her lichtsome pranks on me,
Sae roguish was Wee Janet!

Her eenie were o' bonniest blue;
Wi' rosy cheeks, an' cherry mou';
Owre a', a bonnie healthfu' hue:
A pretty ane was Janet!

Aft by the burnie I espied
The bairn, her spaniel at her side;
The group micht been an artist's pride,
A picture—"Sport and Janet!"

A blicht fell in an evil oor,
It lichted on oor village floo'er;
Lang, lang she lay aneath its poo'er,
Sair hauden doon was Janet!

'Twas sair to stand aside her bed,
'Twas sair to hear her as she said,
"O ma! O ma! my head, my head!"
Alas for puir Wee Janet!

An' when 'twas fear't the bairn wad dee,
O there was mony a tearfu' e'e—
Sic wide regret and sympathie,
For muckle lo'ed was Janet!

Death cam' at last, an' herts were riven;
To us, wha mourn, there 's comfort given;
For playin' 'mang the bairns o' heaven
Fu' cheerie noo is Janet!

In Memoriam.

THOMAS YOUNG.—DIED 10TH MAY 1884; AGED 14 YEARS.

WE weep, dear boy, for thee,
Torn from our side in all thy youthful bloom;
Cut down, alas! to fill an early tomb,
We weep, dear boy, for thee!

We weep, dear boy, for thee,
But not as those to whom no hope is given;
We rest assured that thou art safe in heaven.
No weeping there to thee.

Why should we weep for thee?
No more shall pain and anguish wring thy brow;
Hushed are thy moanings: all is peaceful now,
No need to weep for thee.

Yet we must weep for thee,
Else breaks the heart, o'erfraught with woe and grief;
Our tears are to our stricken souls relief.
Ay, we must weep for thee!

O we shall joy with thee!
When, after all our woes and pains are o'er,
We meet together on a happier shore,
No more to part from thee.

Farewell, dear boy, to thee!
Thou sleep'st within thy little grave in peace;
We too shall follow thee when troubles cease;
Till then, farewell to thee!

In Memoriam.

Rev. Matthew Howieson.—Died 29th May 1886.

LIKE a tall gallant ship which springs a leak,
And sinks full sail into mid ocean's breast;
So he—our stalwart leader, kind and meek—
Has quickly gone to rest.

We loved him for himself—so guileless, pure;
The very soul of honour; cheerful, mild;
True gentleman, the same to rich and poor,
Ingenuous as a child.

Ambassador for Christ, he ever pled
His Master's sacred cause, and sought to win
Bright jewels for His crown; to Calvary led
The soul convinced of sin.

And his best sermon was his daily life,
The poor, the sick were his peculiar care;
Few death-beds in the hour of mortal strife
But found him watching there.

There stands his much-loved church, where twenty years
And more he fed his flock; around the door
Are women weeping, Mary-like, heart tears,
Because he is no more.

No more! He lives with the redeemed in heaven,
And nevermore shall die; he wears the crown,
To all true followers of the Master given,
Of "passionless renown."

In Memoriam.

Margaret M'Kenzie, wife of William M'Kenzie, Police Constable, Bankfoot.—Died 3rd September 1889.

AN angel came down to the harvest field,
At the close of the toilsome day;
To glean for the Lord the best it might yield,
And he bore our beloved one away.

O great was our grief when we knew she was gone,
And bitter the tears we shed;
But the Lord, whom she loved, is kind to His own,
He gives peace to her lone narrow bed.

Her life was a round of sweet deeds of love,
Her works do follow her there
Where her pure spirit dwells, with her Saviour above,
In the mansions all gloriously fair.

But a memory sweet she has left behind—
Of her Christian faith and grace,
Of the patient love which adorned her mind
And shone in her gentle face.

To Mrs Graham, Edinburgh.

In Remembrance of her Visit to the Author,
29th September 1890.

WHEN to the gates of death thou wast brought nigh
Thy marvellous faith in God rose clear to view
In these prophetic words—"I shall not die!"
Yea, they were heard in heaven, and answered too;
For He in whom thou trustedst did renew
The tenure of thy life; to thee He gave,
With thy returning strength, a work to do:
To tell around His mighty power to save,
In that He rescued thee from death and from the grave.

I bless the Lord who brought thee safe through all
Thy overwhelming sorrow, loss, and pain;
Thy tale of woes which did thy life befall
Filled me with grief, I scarce could tears restrain;
Yet, praise His name, He turned thy loss to gain!
For is not Christ with all His fulness thine?
His love and faithfulness with thee remain;
Yea, perfected through suffering, thou dost shine,
Cheering on life's rough way some weary soul like mine.

Dear Lady, fare-thee-well! Christ give thee joy,
With length of days and health and blest content;
May thy "sweet lassie" and thy darling boy
Have choicest blessings on their pathway sent,
O may their hearts with sorrow ne'er be rent,
And may the Saviour mark them for His own;
Them from all danger may His grace prevent,
And may we all be gathered round His throne,
In the bright home above where sorrow ne'er is known.

The Friend of All.

Death in the Path.

(Coltrannie Wood, Perthshire.)

BEFORE me, in the footpath, lay
A tiny bird, bloodstained and torn;
While bending o'er him from a spray,
His little mate seemed all forlorn.

At morn a gleeful thing of life—
His love-notes warbled through the air;
Alas! ere noon, unequal strife
Had strewn his dappled plumage there.

Hawked at till all of life bereft,
Poor hapless bird, I mourn thy fate;
The mangled form thy foe hath left
Recalls me to my mortal state.

Elate with hope life's morn, I ween,
While flower-strewn paths before us lie;
Yet dangers, snares, and foes unseen
Their secret ambush round us ply.

The young man glories in his strength,
With step so firm and heart so brave;
Death-arrows fly, and he at length
Sinks into silence and the grave.

Ambition soars on eager wing,
Nor recks that life is but a thread;
Dreams not of *that* an hour may bring;
A moment lays us with the dead.

* * * *

O Thou who mark'st the sparrow's fall,
In shadow of Thy wings me hide:
Thou seest the dangers, knowest all
The haps which may my life betide!

Christmas.

HAIL, Christmas! From cathedral dome and spire,
O'er land and sea float sounds of joy-bells ringing;
And midnight altars lit with festal fire,
Gleam o'er devoted crowds their offerings bringing
For dedication there. Robed priests are swinging
Censers of incense; and the sonorous pealing
Of the grand organ, and the full choir singing
The "Adeste Fideles" thrill with feeling
Those vast and fervent throngs to the blest Virgin kneeling.

Hail, happy time! O'er the snow-mantled earth
December winds blow keen; the frosty air
Bids curlers to the ice, calls skaters forth
To graceful gliding movement, thrilling rare,
Till evening shadows fall, then all repair
Homeward to Christmas cheer, and joyous dance
Under the mistletoe in the Yule-log's glare;
Friendship and mirth, beauty and love enhance
These Christmas social joys as the swift hours advance

Christmas—ah me! The wolf is at the door
Of many a lowly dwelling in our land;
And wretchedness and want are pressing sore
Alike the good and base.. O ye who stand
In affluence secure, be yours the hand
To succour those who pine in Misery's den!
Know that our blessed Saviour gave command
To "feed the poor." We best obey Him when
In charitable deeds we show "goodwill to men."

The Meeting of the Years.

THE fire in the hearth is flickering low,
And a year's last moments are gliding slow;
While unwonted sound of flitting feet
Is heard in the midnight city street,
Ere twelve—when the Old and New Years meet.

How hushed is the night to the stillness of death,
As we gaze on the dial with bated breath;
For nought is heard, save the mournful breeze,
Till contaction of two vast eternities
Is chimed by the clock of the Old Church Tower,
As the Old Year expires at the midnight hour.

Then high o'er the heads of the watchful throng,
The clang of the glad bells is wafted along,
And a shout as of victory is heard far and near—
Hurrah! hurrah! "A Happy New Year!"

One Year Goes, Another Comes.

THE old year has departed—
Alas! died broken hearted
At hearing the near footfall of the "new."
While his last hour was fleeting
This 'plaint he kept repeating,
"How little done of noble or of true!"
And then he passed
Away at last
To where is no returning,
And we his loss are mourning.

The city bells are pealing
With merry chime, revealing
The joyful advent of a Stranger here

We kept night-watch to meet him,
Right heartily we greet him,
We hail his entrance with a ringing cheer—
"Hurrah!—New Year,
Thou 'rt welcome here!
Let joy be now abounding,
And peace our homes surrounding."

And now the Old Year 's gone,
And now the "New" is on
The stage of Time to play his measured part;
'Twere folly the pretending
To prophesy the ending,
The future only will the truth impart;
The present time is ours
To rightly use our powers,
That each day may tell of something nobly done,
Here is no standing still,
To work then with a will
At whatever task we find beneath the sun!

A New Year Song.

To The Rev. George Williams, 1st January 1891.

WHO' caul' winter win's do blaw, do blaw,
A wirdie sall ower the snaw, the snaw,
Tae Norrieston's Bard,
Wham Heaven bless and guard,
A hertie New Year, an' a', an' a'.

Chorus—A hertie New Year, an' a', an' a',
A happy New Year, an' a', an' a',
Tae Norrieston's bard,
Wham Heaven bless and guard.
A hertie New Year, an' a', an' a'.

An' blest be his basket an' store, an' store ;
Tod-lowrie bide far frae his door, his door,
The guid things o' life
At 's table be rife,
An' blessin's a' round it a score, a score.
A hertie New Year, &c.

Ye muses send him routh o' rhymes, o' rhymes,
To cleed in a garb o' auld times, auld times,
In gweed Aiberdeen
They 'll jingle I ween
Like siller bells rung in sweet chimes, sweet chimes,
A hertie New Year, &c.

An' here 's to his hert an' hame, an' hame,
An' here 's to his name an' fame, an' fame,
New lustre ilk year
Glint on his career,
Be the toasts o' a freen' aye the same, the same,
A hertie New Year, &c.

The Haunted Man.

[The following excellent poem by the Rev. George Williams, the friend and correspondent of Mr Robertson, is here reprinted so that the reply it called forth may be better understood.]

MY life 's made wretched by a ghaist,
By day nor nicht I canna rest—
A poo'erfu' ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What 'll fouk say?"

I 've sat 'mang graifs on table-stane,
An' crooned auld sangs my leefu' lane;
But fear this ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What 'll fouk say?"

Deid can'les wadna gar me jow,
Or turn a hair in a' my pow,
Like fearsome ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What 'll fouk say?"

Do what I will, it has to see,
Gang whaur I will it gangs wi' me—
The slouchin' ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What 'll fouk say?"

I gang to kirk, or bide at hame,
The ghaist wytes on me a' the same—
The poo'erfu' ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What 'll fouk say?"

Tho' angry, I wad gar ye trew
I 'm frien's an' unco pleased wi' you ;
It 's this fause ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', " What 'll fouk say ? "

Gin ye lack sillar or braw claes,
I ne'er lat on I see your face,
Because the ghaist I canna lay
'S speirin', speirin', " What 'll fouk say ? "

Gin ye be ane o' the genteel,
O ! syne I 'll sweir I like ye weel :
Wae worth the ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', " What 'll fouk say ? "

I 'm scrimp o' bawbees o' my ain,
But talk as gin I 'd lots to len' ;
Backset by ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', " What 'll fouk say ? "

An' waur nor fibs aboot my purse,
I e'en maun pray whan I cud curse—
Possesst wi' ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', " What 'll fouk say ? "

Man, a' my life 's a mak'-believe,
My Maker's sel' I wad deceive—
The awfu' ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', " What 'll fouk say ? "

I like an aefauld, honest chiel,
Wha wadna flinch afore the deil,
Nor gruesome ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What'll fouk say?"

To richt aye *yea;* to wrang aye *nay*—
"Thay say; quhat say thay? lat thame say!"—
In spite o' ghaist I canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What'll fouk say?"

Rype oot my hert, mak' me upricht,
O God, wi' gleeds o' Thine ain licht:
Ca' aff the ghaist, whilk Thou canst lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What'll fouk say?"

Reply to the Haunted Man.

FAT's to be dune wi' ye, puir chiel,
Sae sair forfochen wi' a deil
In shape o' ghaist ye canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What'll fouk say?"

We'll sen' ye owre the dub to France,
To drink cognac an' smoke an' dance,
An' charm the ghaist ye canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What'll fouk say?"

There lat ye speel the Eiffel Too'er
Twal times per diem, *that* sud hae poo'er
To wab the ghaist ye canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What 'll fouk say?"

On tapmost knowp o' 't cock your lane,
An' skirl Scotch bagpipes, *that* sud spaen
Or deave awa', gin 't dinna lay,
The ghaist aye speirin', "What 'll fouk say?"

Thus far, gin 't turn oot a' in vain,
Just haud ye far'er sooth to Spain,
An' fecht wi' nowt—syne easier slay
The ghaist aye speirin', "What 'll fouk say?"

Or gang ye roun' to Italie,
Signoras there micht tak' your e'e
Clean aff the ghaist ye canna lay,
Speirin', speirin', "What 'll fouk say?"

Fan a''s dune, gin ye getna peace,
Turn roun' on heel, an' i' the face
O' ghaist or deil snap thooms an' say,
"Be 't richt; I *carena* what 'll fouk say!"

O Dinna Ban.

O DINNA ban the douce auld man,
We 've a' oor fau'ts, I daresay ;
There 's nae a man in a' the lan'
But needs God's grace and mercy.

An' ponder 't weel, my rhymin' chiel,
Yer language isna bonny ;
I widna even ca' the deil
The names ye hae ca'd Johnny.

"Taed," "Adder," "Spider," we can trace
Writ in yer category !
To mouth sic terms wad sure disgrace
Baith Radical and Tory.

But maybe, lad, ye hae been bit
Wi' Johnny's terrier doggie,
Syne aye the hair to heal the sair,
An' aye the ither coggie.

Gin' achin' heid an' empty purse
Inspire yer wild reflection,
Tak' my advice, ye may do worse—
Gan' th' opposite direction !

But dinna ban the douce auld man,
Nae waur is he than mony ;
Bereavements, years, an' grief, an' tears,
Micht plead for puir auld Johnny.

The Doctor.

INSCRIBED TO DR BEATTIE, STANLEY, PERTHSHIRE.

'TWAS like 's the grun' was whirlin' roun',
While through my breist gaed stang an' stoun';
Forbye a bummin' i' my croon—
I needed sair the doctor.

I flang me doon upon the bed,
My back ice-cauld, face burnin' red;
Oot spak' my grannie, an' she said,
"Losh, we maun ca' the doctor."

He cam'—gart 's knuckles play knick-knack
Upon my breist, my ribs, my back;
What sairs your *habeas corpus* ack,
When near ye sic a doctor?

His something-nosis he made oot;
Says he, "It 's pleurisy, nae doot;
Lie there a week, or ye sall rue 't"—
An autocrat the doctor!

But what wi' poultice, potion, peel,
Prescribed in order by the chiel,
Within the week I gat rael weel—
Big blessin's on the doctor.

Headless Rhymes.

NOBLER than trophy of Sword, Flag, or Gun,
The Pen, which to virtue a nation doth mould;
The words of the Sage shall outlast the sun,
All deathless the work of the Thinker bold;
For nought can the fire of true genius damp,
Tho' often 'tis hid 'neath a lowly roof;
Still brightly it glows like a beacon lamp,
While those it would bless often hold far aloof.

May-Day with the Children.

THE children are joyful to-day;
For, lo, the beautiful May
Hath strewn the valleys and hills with flowers,
Which gladden and sweeten fair childhood's hours.

The children are happy to-day,
In the May sun's genial ray:
O let them sing praise to our Father in heaven,
Who a Sun and a Shield to His children hath given—

Even Jesus, who waiteth to-day
To wash all our sins away:
O let His sweet Spirit shine into each breast,
Then we shall become truly happy and blest,
And grow, like the flowers of May,
Lovelier far than they!

A May Song.

HILLY ho! hilly ho! hark the bugle horn,
Proclaiming the dawn of the glad May morn!
Come where the wild flowers the greenwood adorn—
'Tis May, vernal May.

The young lambkin sports on the gowany lea,
The blythe birdie warbles love-notes on the tree,
The May sun is shining athwart the blue sea—
'Tis May, gladsome May.

The greensward is gleaming with pearly dew,
The skylark is piping far up in the blue;
Come, my love, come, I am waiting for you—
'Tis May, charming May.

May flowers are blooming on meadow and hill,
They bloom on the banks of the glittering rill,
They bloom round the homestead, the church, and the mill—
'Tis May, blushing May.

O come, my love, come to the woodlands gay,
While the sun's bright beams 'mong the dewdrops play;
For bright is the morn of the opening day
Of May, beauteous May.

Let us hie o'er the heath to fair Murthly's dell,
Where the primroses grow and the fairies dwell,
And we 'll pledge a love-cup o'er the bog-bush well—
'Tis May, joyous May.

Hilly ho! hilly ho! 'tis the bugle horn
Resounding afar through the wild Muir-o'-Thorn,
Where sparkles the dew of the bright May morn—
Come away, love—away!

The Braes o' Coltrannie.

WHEN a' wat wi' dew on a vernal May mornin',
The braes o' Coltrannie are bonnie to see;
At first blink o' daylicht the hilltaps adornin',
The muirlan' choirs burst oot wi' rapturous glee;
The braes o' Coltrannie, the braes o' Coltrannie,
The bonnie green braes o' Coltrannie for me!

There Nature her marvellous beauty discloses
In sweet mossy banks an' bricht carpets o' green,
Bedeck'd wi' the violets, blue-bells, an' primroses,
That lustre the woodlands wi' beauteous sheen;
The braes o' Coltrannie, the braes o' Coltrannie,
They 're bonnie, the braes o' Coltrannie, I ween.

O sweet are the mem'ries o' innocent childhood,
When 'mang cheery bairns I roamed thae green braes,
Or romped through the brake an' the deep sombre wildwood—
Ah! life then seemed made up o' bricht simmer days;
The braes o' Coltrannie, the braes o' Coltrannie,
I 'm fain noo to lilt a bit sang in their praise.

Cushnie Glen.

SAFT the wastlin win's are blawin',
Gentle spring has come again;
See the sunny shoo'ers are fa'in':
I'll awa' to Cushnie Glen!

There I wad be careless strayin'
By the burnie, doon the den;
View the milk-white lammies playin'
'Mang the braes o' Cushnie Glen.

Free to roam owre moor an' mountain,
Scale the crag, an' climb the Ben;
Fondly muse beside the fountain,
Sparklin' pure in Cushnie Glen.

By my side my winsome dearie—
Rarer bliss I cudna ken—
O the thocht o't mak's me weary
To win aff to Cushnie Glen.

I will lea' the dinsome city,
Turn my back on Lawlan' plain;
Sae I'll end my rhymin' ditty,
An' awa' to Cushnie Glen.

Saft the wastlin' win's are blawin',
Gentle spring has come again;
See the sunny shoo'ers are fa'in'!
I'm awa' to Cushnie Glen.

L'Envoi.

WHEN ye gang by Cushnie Glen
Speir ye oot my gallant lover;
Gin he be 'mang Leochel men
Shootin' paitricks, grouse, an' plover.

Eh! but he's the bonnie chiel—
Noble broo and sturdy bearin'!
Ne'er lat on I lo'e him weel,
Or that a preen for him I'm carin'.

Nane the less he'll understand
'At I'm thinkin't lang withoot him—
Nae his marrow i' the land,
'Deed I'm gaun clean daft aboot him!

Mind him that there's sooth aboot
Ane ye ken was speirin' for him;
Say na wha—he'll trew nae doot
It's just the lass 'at does adore him.

Mind to gang by Cushnie Glen,
Speir ye oot my gallant lover,
'Mang the braes wi' Leochel men,
Aifter deer an' grouse an' plover.

The Maid o' Norrieston.

THE bloom was on the hawthorn tree,
The wild-rose had but newly blown,
When I gaed wast frae auld Dundee
To stay a week in Norrieston.

There as I careless musing strayed
By wimplin' stream an' floo'ery loan,
I chanced to meet a pretty maid—
The winsome maid o' Norrieston.

'Mang a' the lasses I hae seen
'Tween Callander an' Kilmaron;
There's nane cud match this bonnie queen—
The lovely maid o' Norrieston.

Up gaed the merry lark sae hie,
An' this I gathered frae his tone—
"Ye 're come, my lad, frae auld Dundee
To woo the maid o' Norrieston."

I twined a wild-rose in her hair,
Her love-licht glances on me shone;
I strained her to my bosom there—
The gentle maid o' Norrieston.

Gie war'ly fouk their gowd an' land,
An' a' they set their minds upon;
My treasures are the hert an' hand
O' the sweet maid o' Norrieston.

The thrush pipes on the hawthorn tree,
An' this I gaither frae his tone,
"Just tak' the lassie to Dundee—
Ye 've won the maid o' Norrieston."

The Maiden Wha Shore in the Bandwin wi' Me. *

O BONNIE 's the heather on Formal hill
When waves the ripe corn aroun' Corrielea!
'Twas there I first saw bonnie Maggie Cargill,
The maiden wha shore in the bandwin wi' me—
A weel-faured young maiden,
A winsome young maiden,
The maiden wha shore in the bandwin wi' me.

An' O, but the lassie was gentle and lo'esome!
I ne'er will forget the love-glance o' her e'e;

* Mr Ford has the following explanatory note to the song:—"The days of 'bandwins' passed with the extinction of the 'hewk' as the universal implement in harvest work, and the introduction of the swing scythe, so speedily superseded by the reaping machine, and many persons even in country places will ere long not be able to tell what a 'bandwin' was. In the days when the harvest fields were wholly cleared by the reaping-hook, and that not so very long ago, one person, male or female, was delegated to bind and set in stooks the sheaves shorn by a certain number of shearers, more or less according to the

Her lang raven locks flowin' roun' her white bosom,
A Ruth 'mang the reapers seemed Maggie to me—
A dark-eyed young maiden,
A lovely young maiden,
The maiden wha shore in the bandwin wi' me.

Her mien i' the cornfield was gracefu' an' queenly,
Tho' lowly her kindred aroun' Corrielea;
Native beauty an' grace shone aroun' her serenely;
She was peerless wha shore in the bandwin wi' me—
An artless young maiden,
A matchless young maiden,
The maiden wha shore in the bandwin wi' me.

In hairst-time we twa shore the same rig thegither;
At high-twal we rested aneath the same tree;
At e'en fondly pairted the ane frae the ither
Near her ain mither's cot richt abune Corrielea—
A loving young maiden,
A guileless young maiden,
The maiden wha shore in the bandwin wi' me.

deftness of the operators and the quality of the crop, and each set so appointed formed a 'bandwin.' Universal as the custom was, and commonly as the word has been used to indicate the order of harvest work described, Mr Robertson is the first, so far as I have seen, to celebrate it in song. For this reason, as well as for its inherent excellence, our wish is that the song will become popular, and certainly the beautiful and appropriate music which has been composed for it by our talented friend Mr Henry Dryerre, of Blairgowrie, should materially contribute to this end."

But ah, cruel Fate ! when last autumn had gane,
An' winter storms raged roun' the hills o' Glenshee,
The ill-starred young lassie gaed forth her lea lane ;
Her ewie had strayed far ayont Corrielea—
A tender young maiden,
A kind-hearted maiden,
The maiden wha shore in the bandwin wi' me.

We scoured hill an' dale till the gloamin', syne hurried
A search in the glen as far up as Glenshee,
An' there in a snaw-wreath the lassie lay buried—
Ah, lifeless the maid wha my bride was to be !
Wae 's me for the maiden !
My loved an' lost maiden !
The maiden wha shore in the bandwin wi' me.

Ceased the storm, an' thro' clud-rifts the munelicht fell streamin',
On her face—O I'll mind o 't whaure'er I shall be ;
An' I cudna hae tauld was I wauken or dreamin'
When they bore my deid maid owre the snaw-covered lea ;
Nae a tear for my maiden,
Nor a sob for my maiden :
But my heart bruik, an' oh, hoo I wished I micht dee !

In Ochterga'en kirkyard, all under the willow,
She lies wha was sweeter than life unto me ;

Sae I will awa' owre the deep ragin' billow,
For Maggie Cargill never mair I shall see!
Alas! the dear maiden!
Alack! the sweet maiden!
The maiden wha shore in the bandwin wi' me.

Frae scenes o' my youth nae mair joy can I borrow,
Despairin' I wander aroun' Corrielea;
On a far foreign strand I maun bide a hert-sorrow
For the maiden wha shore in the bandwin wi' me.
Then adieu to the maiden,
My fondly loved maiden!
And adieu to the loved scenes aroun' Corrielea!

Excelsior!

FORLORN upon life's troubled sea,
No earthly friend to succour thee;
Yet guardian angels hover near,
A heavenly voice falls on the ear—
Excelsior!

When by Privation sorely pressed,
Till Hope expires within the breast,
And grim Despair would urge to sin,
O list the gentle voice within—
Excelsior!

Where Pleasure spreads th' enticing snare,
For hapless souls all unaware;
When Vice would lure from Virtue's road,
Take up the word and trust in God—
Excelsior!

When baffled in th' unequal strife
'Gainst sin and wrong which crush thy life,
Or faltering in the heavenly race,
The word anew thy strength shall brace—
Excelsior!

Assailed by foes on every hand,
Still trust in God and firmly stand,
Nor yield thee to the Tempter's sway,
But shout the word and cleave thy way—
Excelsior!

Though black the heavens seem overhead,
And tempests thick around thee spread,
Yet faith shall pierce the darkest sky,
While through the rift thou 'lt hear the cry—
Excelsior!

And when at last thy race is run,
The battle fought, the victory won;
To higher spheres thy soul shall wing
Its flight, while guardian angels sing—
Excelsior!

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